CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) The stock of rice and wheat in the central pool as on 1-7-2000 as compared with buffer stock norms is as under:

(Figs. in lakh tonnes)

Commodity	Stocks	Buffer norms	Excess Stock
Rice	144.90	100.00	44.90
Wheat	277.57	143.00	134.57

(b) Due to all time high stock of 422.47 lakh tonne as on 1.7.2000 there is pressure on the storage capacity. However, stops have been taken to maximize the utilization of the available storage capacity. Wherever needed, additional storage is hired by the FCI from the CWC, SWC, private parties etc.

(c) Yes, sir.

(d) The excess stocks will increase carrying cost per year. The estimated carrying cost for the year 1999-2000 is Rs. 172.02 per quintal/year.

(e) Possibilities of export of wheat are being explored. However, no concrete response has so far emerged. Ruling prices of Central Pool wheat stock in India, as compared to the international prices, being high, export of Indian wheat has not been commercially viable.

Storage of foodgrains

†525. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is no capacity left for storing foodgrains in the stores of Food Corporation of India;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government have taken a

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

decision of selling foodgrains in the market which has been stored for last few years;

(c) if so, at what rate and by when; whether Government will try to send the said foodgrains to the consumers directly; and

(d) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) No, Sir. FCI has adequate storage capacity of 27.32 Million tonnes against the total stock of 25.13 Million tonnes (92% utilization) all over the country as on 1-6-2000.

(b) to (d) Yes, Sir. FCI has been authorised to sell the following quantities of foodgrains in the open market in order to reduce the level of stocks.

(Figs. in lakh tonnes)

S. No.	Foodgrains	Quantity
1.	C&D Cat. Of Wheat	0.30
2.	Canadian Red Wheat	0.15
3.	'D' category Rice	1.30
4.	Rice procured under relaxed specification (crop year 1997-98)	3.09
5.	Paddy of crop year 1996-97 to 1998-99	0.45

C&D category wheat, Canadian red wheat and paddy are sold through tenders at best available prices. D category rice and the rice procured under relaxed specifications are also sold through tender but the cut off price is fixed at 50% of their economic cost. FCI has also been authorised to liquidate wheat @ Rs. 900/- per qtl. under Open Market Sale Scheme to any buyer from any depot in the country except Punjab where stocks are to be sold @ Rs. 700/- per qtl. during July, 2000, @ Rs. 750/- per qtl. during August, 2000 and @ Rs. 800/- per qtl. during September, 2000. Any buyer can purchase wheat from FCI subject to the condition that the minimum indented quantity is 10 MTs.